

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 4390

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX

SUBJ: MEXICO'S VISITING VIP'S: IF THIS IS TUESDAY IT MUST BE THE SHAH

REF: MEXICO 4213; MEXICO 4218

1. THIS YEAR, MEXICO HAS WELCOMED QUEEN ELIZABETH, VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ, FORMER CHANCELLOR WILLY BRANDT, PRC VICE PREMIER CHEN YUNG HUI, TANZANIAN PRESIDENT NYERERE, THE SHAH OF IRAN, SENEGAL'S PRESIDENT SENGHOR, AND COUNTLESS FOREIGN OFFICIALS OR DIGNITARIES OF LESSER RANK. STILL TO COME ARE A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS ECHEVERRIA AND KJELL LAUGERUD OF GUATEMALA THIS MONTH AND THE VISITS OF ROMANIAN PRESIDENT CEAUCESCU, PRIME MINISTER PALME OF SWEDEN, AND PRIME MINISTER MICHAEL MANLEY OF JAMAICA IN JUNE. THIS DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUT VIP ATTENDANCE AT THE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (WCIWY) OPENING HERE NEXT MONTH (WITH THE POSSIBLE ATTENDANCE

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OF MRS. ANWAR SADAT, MRS. TRUDEAU, THE WIFE OF NETHERLANDS

PRIME MINISTER UYL -- WHO KNOWS WHO ELSE?) BEYOND JUNE, WE ARE SOMEWHAT FEARFUL OF PREDICTING (THOUGH THE VISIT OF YUGOSLAVIA'S TITO HAS BEEN RELIABLY FORECAST). IN ANY EVENT THE STREAM OF VISITORS SHOWS NO SIGNS OF SLACKENING, NOR DOES THE CONTINUING PLETHORA OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS HERE OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER.

2. MEXICANS, AS WELL AS THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND OTHER FOREIGN RESIDENTS, HAVE BECOME SOMEWHAT ACCUSTOMED IF NOT BLASE (AFTER ALL, THE QUEEN AND THE SHAH?) ABOUT THESE VISITS. THERE IS OCCASIONAL LOW-PITCHED MUTTERING IN SOME MEXICAN QUARTERS ABOUT THE COST OF MEXICO'S LAVISH HOSPITALITY. AT A MORE SOPHISTICATED LEVEL, PARTICULARLY AMONG DIPLOMATS, BEMUSEMENT SEEMS TO BE YIELDING TO SKEPTICISM AS TO ANY SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS THE GOM MAY DERIVE FROM THESE VISITS. THE QUESTION ARISES AS TO WHETHER THE GOM IN FACT HAS ANY CLEAR OBJECTIVE, OTHER THAN THE "ENHANCEMENT OF MEXICAN (AND ECHEVERRIA'S) PRESTIGE". IN ITS PROGRAM OF VIP SCALP-HUNTING.

3. THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THE GOM REALLY DISCRIMINATES IN ITS CHOICE OR OR ATTITUDE TOWARD ITS EMINENT VISITORS. AN ELIZABETH II EQUALS A SENGHOR EQUALS A BRANDT EQUALS A NYERERE. GOM INTEREST IN RELATIONS WITH THE UK OR IRAN SHOULD BE GREATER THAN THAT IN MEXICAN-SENEGAL RELATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, BUT RECOGNITION OF THIS IS NOT APPARENT IN TREATMENT AND PROGRAMS FOR THE VARIOUS VISITS.

4. MOST VISITS PRODUCE A STACK OF PAPER IN THE FORM OF CULTURAL AGREEMENTS, DECLARATIONS, COMMUNIQUEES AND THE LIKE WHICH ARE GENERALLY HIGHLY PERISHABLE. WHEN MATTERS OF MORE SUBSTANCE ARE DEALT WITH, IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR THAT MEXICO BENEFITS. FOR EXAMPLE: DESPITE GOM PRESSURE DURING THE VISITS OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, SIR CHRISTOPHER SOAMES, AND WILLY BRANDT, RESPECTIVELY, THE VISITORS UNDERSTANDABLY DID NOT SUDDENLY BECOME STRONG SUPPORTERS OF ECHEVERRIA'S BELOVED CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (CERDS). DURING THE SHAH'S VISIT, A HIGH-RANKING FOREIGN SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL COMPLAINED TO OUR AMBASSADOR OF THE GREAT DIFFICULTIES IN FORMULATING AN ACCEPTABLE JOINT CONFIDENTIAL

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MUNIQUE, OWING TO IRANIAN PRESSURE. IN THE END (SEE MEXICO 4218) THE IRANIANS WON THE REFERENCES TO THE "PERSIAN GULF" AND THE INDIAN OCEAN FOR WHICH THEY WERE PRESSING. THE EMBASSY FURTHER HAS STRONG REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ECHEVERRIA WAS PRESSURED BY IRAN INTO HIS STATEMENT ON OPEC (SEE MEXICO 4213), GOING BEYOND WHAT HE HAD BEEN WILLING TO SAY UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT AND PROBABLY BEYOND WHAT HE REALLY CONSIDERED PRUDENT (THERE

ARE SOME INDICATIONS THAT ECHEVERRIA IS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS).

5. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT MEXICAN HOSPITALITY IS WINNING SOME SUPPORT FOR ECHEVERRIA'S ALL-BUT-ANNOUNCED CANDIDACY FOR THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AND FOR A PRESTIGIOUS POSITION IN AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IN HIS NEXT "CAREER". AND MEXICO IS LAYING UP GOOD WILL FOR FUTURE INITIATIVES IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS. BUT THE MOST LIKELY BENEFIT FOR MEXICO, INTANGIBLE THOUGH THIS MAY BE, IS THE ENLIGHTENING AND EVEN EDUCATIONAL EFFECT UPON THE VISITORS, OF WHAT MEXICO IS TODAY AND MAY BE TOMORROW. FEW VISITORS WILL CARRY AWAY WITH THEM THE TRADITIONAL STEREOTYPE OF THE SLEEPY MEXICAN DOZING AWAY UNDER A CACTUS. MOREOVER, THE WIDE SUPPORT FOR MEXICO'S INITIATIVE ON CERDS IS REASSERTED AND REINFORCED BY THE VISITS. IS ALL THIS WORTH THE EFFORT? THE GOM OBVIOUSLY BELIEVES SO AND SO DO THE VISITORS.
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